



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**EX-EMPLOYEE OF AXA ADVISORS, LLC SENTENCED TO 30 MONTHS
IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR DEFRAUDING CLIENTS**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that THOMAS J. CHASE, a former financial advisor for AXA Advisors, LLC ("AXA") in Cleveland, Ohio, a United States subsidiary of the global financial services organization AXA Financial, Inc., was sentenced on Friday to 30 months of imprisonment in Manhattan federal court for defrauding AXA clients.

According to the Indictment, while employed as an AXA financial advisor, THOMAS J. CHASE devised a scheme to defraud clients of AXA of investment funds. From December 29, 1997 through September 25, 2001, CHASE faxed forged instructions from the AXA office in Cleveland, Ohio to the AXA office in New York,

New York requesting approximately \$709,763 in disbursements from client accounts.

According to court papers filed in connection with CHASE's sentencing, in late October 2001, AXA received a telephone call from the North American Menopause Society ("NAMS") regarding a check in the amount of \$137,578.55 drawn on NAMS's AXA account in September 2001, an account managed by CHASE. An investigation of the disbursement revealed that a series of transactions involving the NAMS account had been conducted using forged letters of authorization to cause the unauthorized sale of mutual funds held in the account and checks disbursement of the proceeds. Also, an inspection of the \$137,578.55 check revealed that it had been endorsed by CHASE and deposited into his personal bank account.

According to court papers, on or about October 29, 2001, CHASE was interviewed by AXA investigators regarding the disbursement. CHASE admitted misappropriating the funds from the NAMS account, as well as other accounts. CHASE admitted in a written statement that he "used letters of authorization with client forged signatures to obtain checks that were then deposited into my own account for use." At the conclusion of the interview, CHASE was terminated by AXA. Further investigation of the AXA accounts managed by CHASE revealed that from on or about December 29, 1997 up to and including on or about September 25,

2001, CHASE used forged letters of authorization to obtain seventeen checks totaling \$709,763 from four of his clients, including NAMS and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Finding that CHASE abused a position of trust, United States District Court Judge LEWIS A. KAPLAN sentenced CHASE to a term of 30 months of imprisonment and restitution in the amount of \$489,342.

Mr. KELLEY praised the efforts of the FBI in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorney BRET R. WILLIAMS is in charge of the prosecution.

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